

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Health

PRESCHOOL DIVISION
Harrisburg

THE CARE OF THE BABY

THE BABY'S HOME

In order that the parents and the baby may be safe, it is necessary that the house be in good repair, not damp, with no leaks in the roof, with windows to let the sunshine in, with a cellar that stays dry, good ventilation, and no musty odors.

The house is best heated by hot water, steam, or hot air; next best by a coal stove. Gas and oil stoves exhaust the air too quickly. An open grate or fireplace insures good ventilation.

Be sure that stoves and open fires are screened to protect the baby.

The temperature of living rooms should not be above 68 degrees.

There should be screens at windows and doors, and if possible a screened-in porch; good sewer connections and decent toilet arrangements; a covered garbage can; no refuse, manure heaps, ashes, pig-stye, or puddles, near the house; a clean, orderly yard; all steps in repair.

THE BABY'S ROOM

The baby is entitled to a room where sunshine and fresh air pour in. He should have a bed to himself. An inexpensive bed can be made of a box or a basket with a piece of folded blanket or felting for mattress, and this covered by water-proof material—rubber or oil cloth.

Metal cribs, up to six years are good, if the sides are protected by curtains or pads.

THE BABY'S HABITS

A baby has no habits at birth. But he quickly becomes a bundle of good or bad ones, and YOU are responsible for them. Settle it early, whether he shall rule the home unwisely, or you shall rule it wisely.

THERE ARE SIX GREAT HEALTH HABITS TO CULTIVATE:

Right Eating.
Right Sleeping.
Right Cleansing.
Right Exercise and Play.
Right Dressing.
Right Care of Bowels and Bladder.

I.—Right Eating:

The **Right Kind of Food**—his own mother's milk for 9 months, with the gradual adding of other foods, beginning as early as 6 months, leading up to varied suitable diet by the 12th month. (See Diet Cards published by Pennsylvania Department of Health.)

The **Right Interval between Feedings**—and these kept perfectly regular by the clock. Every 3 or 4 hours during the day, according to the doctor's orders. After the third month night feedings may be stopped.

A feeding should last about 20 minutes, after the first few weeks. The baby should not sleep during this time. If he is not satisfied after 20 minutes, consult the doctor or nurse.

If he nurses so rapidly that he seems to be able to take no more after 10 or 15 minutes, make him nurse more slowly, by drawing the nipple from his mouth, now and then, and letting him rest for a few minutes.

II.—Right Sleeping

Always alone in his own bed.
Never rocked, trotted, shaken, patted.
Never with a pacifier.
No pillow until 2 months old, then a small, soft one.
Out of doors in suitable weather, day and night.

Sleeping Table:

For a newborn baby and up to 2 months 22 to 20 hours of sleep. Gradually more hours awake.

At 6 months at least a total of 18 hours are needed.

From 6 months to 1 year taper gradually from 18 to 15 hours.

Long *nights* of sleep are needed for children of all ages.

At 2 years a 12 hour night with morning and afternoon naps.

At 4 years a 12 hour night with afternoon nap.

Afternoon naps should be continued up to $4\frac{1}{2}$ years if possible.

After naps stop and up to 10 years midday rests for all children are desirable, and are especially necessary for underweights.

III.—Right Cleansing:

A warm sponge bath, at a regular hour in the morning, until the cord drops. After that daily in his own tub or basin, kept for him alone. In a warm room (70 deg. with no draft). At first in water 100° — 95° ; gradually less and less warm; then tepid, 86° ; then cool, 66° . Cold bath should be given on advice of the physician. After the morning bath becomes "cool", warm baths should be given at night for purposes of cleanliness, not less than three times a week. In hot weather he may be sponged off two or three times a day.

Teeth, scalp, ears, nails, should be kept clean and in good order always.

SUCH HABITS OF CLEANLINESS MAKE FOR HEALTH, STRENGTH AND BEAUTY.

IV.—Right Exercise and Play:

The baby will play, himself, naturally. Let him play on a sheet, or blanket, or comfort, on the floor or in a "Kiddy Coop." Kicking with the clothes off and crawling as he grows older, are good for him.

Let him develop the muscles of his arms and legs, by pushing against your hands.

He should not sit in a high chair until he is able to hold

spine and head erect, at about seven months. Sitting a long time during early years in a chair or go-cart, is bad for him.

Have only playthings that may be kept clean. Let him pull himself up and stand as he wants to, but never urge standing or walking.

V.—Right Dressing:

Always the clothing should be suited to the weather and the season. In warm weather light clothing should be worn, —when the temperature is not over 70° a silk-and-wool band, a light cotton, or silk-and-wool shirt, a cotton flannel skirt with cotton top, a cotton slip, cotton socks, and a diaper.

At lower temperatures outer coat, blankets and hood. When the temperature rises to 70° remove flannel skirt.

When 75° remove also stockings and shirt.

When 80° remove also dress or slip leaving diaper and light band.

VI.—Right Care of Bladder and Bowels:

By the time a well baby is four months old, soiling of the diapers need not occur. Starting in the early weeks of life, hold the child over a small vessel or cup. The tiny baby will, with surprising quickness, adopt the holding of its stools until freed from the diaper and properly placed. If this is done regularly, just after the morning feeding or about nine o'clock, it not only trains the child into an excellent habit, away from constipation, but saves unnecessary washing. If the bowels do not act promptly at first, it may be well to stroke the skin about the anus, or insert gently the end of a small rubber catheter, well oiled, or vaselined, or a bit of castile soap.

Right feeding will keep the bowels regular. There should be no wetting of the diaper after the first year.